

# Traditional Fiddle Workshop

## @ Strachur



Newsletter  
Feb/March 2016

Registered Scottish Charity No. SCO33935

### Dates for your Diary

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Classes end for the  
session Week  
beginning Monday  
16<sup>th</sup> May.  
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Sat 21<sup>st</sup> May:

Open evening at  
The Smiddy. Bring  
your fiddle for a  
tune!

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Wed 25<sup>th</sup> May:  
Summer Party in  
Hall. 7 - 10(ish)

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Sun 29<sup>th</sup> May:

Troop Aid  
Fundraiser in Hall.

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Wed 1<sup>st</sup> June:

Meet Mairi Voinot  
for tutor session in  
hall

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Sat 9<sup>th</sup> July:  
Nigel Gatherer  
Mixed Workshop -  
£20

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Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> June:  
LFW AGM 7 p.m.

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### Editor's Musings.

Rather thin newsletter this time round, as very few contributions have been submitted for publication. Maybe nobody has been doing anything or attending any events since the last letter? Or maybe just shy?

The committee have been putting in a lot of thought to the future of the workshop and to what our members want from it, and Evie put out a questionnaire (on-line and also by post) to all members seeking responses as to how you saw the workshop progressing. Returns from this have been disappointing in their numbers so far, and it makes the job of the committee harder when we do not really know what members want from the workshop.

Classes will end on **Monday and Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May** and the annual party will be on **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May** in the hall. As usual members are asked to bring along food and drinks to share and also instruments for an open session to round off the year. It is also suggested that those who feel so inclined bring donations for the Dunoon Food Bank.

With an eye on next session's activities there will be a session with Mairi Voinot (who was one of the tutors at the Findlay Allison Junior Workshop) on **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June**. This is with a view to adding Mairi to our tutor pool. Please make an effort to come along to meet Mairi, and if you are coming, please bring £5 to cover cost of tutor fees, travel and hall hire as this is an additional event.

On **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July** we have booked one of Scotland's best-known traditional tutors, Nigel Gatherer, to run a mixed workshop for us. Details have already been sent out to all members and places are filling up quickly as the workshop is being advertised outwith the LFW membership. If you are thinking of attending then please get application form (available on our website) to Teresa with your £20 as soon as possible. Please also e-mail me to add your name to our growing list of attendees. I am keeping the numbers as we have a maximum class size. [jkargyll@gmail.com](mailto:jkargyll@gmail.com).

Enough of my gripes. Let's make a big effort for the new session and try to rejuvenate the LFW. Bring along a friend to try out our classes and spread the word wherever you can. The future of our workshop is in the hands of our members, so let's keep it healthy and thriving.

John

## Friendship Group

On Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April a few of the fiddlers went along to entertain the Friendship Group in the hall. The group was augmented for the day by guests from outwith Strachur who were brought along courtesy of the Cowal Befrienders, so a good audience was guaranteed.

The usual suspects of Evie, Ishbel, Martin and John played a mixed set of tunes and John and Geraldine Chamberlain provided a couple of songs each to add to the mix. As a result of the performance we were asked if we would go along to play for the residents at Fountain Quay, so now the LFW can go on tour!

It is good to get the LFW out playing in public to let people see and hear what we can offer – maybe even gain some new recruits. Geraldine has now signed up for fiddle tuition and her singing is an additional element in our future concert parties.

## Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival

I was fortunate enough to be invited once again to comper the fiddle competitions in the Regent Hotel in Oban at this year's festival (the 33<sup>rd</sup> year of this major event) which took place from 29<sup>th</sup> April till 1<sup>st</sup> May.

Competitors range from the very young (under 12), through the 12 -16 group to the adult competitors who contest 2 major classes – March, Strathspey and Reel, and Slow Air (Traditional). The standard is always of the very highest and all competitors offered a very varied selection of tunes in their sets, ranging from West Coast pipe marches to the great tunes of Skinner, Marshall and Gow. The junior players came from as far afield as Islay, Dingwall, Edinburgh, Campbeltown and other distant places, though once again there was a noted absence of anyone from either of the Cowal workshops. Where are our young players hiding out?

The six adult players who contested the Open competitions came from Tarves, Tarland, East Kilbride, Edinburgh and the USA! Five of the six were Glenfiddich invitees and two were previous winners! Their playing was "chust sublime". Judge for the day was top Scottish Traditional fiddler Paul Anderson from Tarland and his adjudication and advice were so valuable as he spoke of the importance of accurate tuning and intonation, good bowing, and timing. He stressed that when we attempt pipe marches we really should be listening to top pipers playing the tunes. Tempo is very important in playing those tunes and we must resist the temptation to play them too fast! Not a problem for me, anyway!

I thoroughly recommend that you put next year's event in your diaries, including The Masters on the Friday evening in St John's Church, where invited players compete in fiddle and accordion competitions. This is a great musical feast.

**Folk at the Forge:**  
**Open Session**

There's an evening session at Strachur Smiddy Museum on **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May**. All are welcome to listen, join in – or even do a turn. (No pressure tho'!)

Please bring a £5.00 donation for Smiddy Trust funds, your own refreshments – and your songs / instruments, just in case you do fancy having a go. Dress warmly. Doors open 19.15, session probably ends around 21.30 (but enthusiasts could continue in The Clachan next door....)

The 'house' band will be The Old Bores and Friends.

Alison

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I can recommend the sessions at The Smiddy as a great night out in a very informal atmosphere. The venue is tiny and this adds so much to the feel; musicians and audience are really close. It is a grand venue to try out your latest song or tune and the regulars and house band will give you all the encouragement you need and even some backing!

Some of you have come along and played there previously; as part of the house band for a couple of years now I rate The Smiddy one of my favourite venues.

John

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**End of Term Party**

The party is on **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May** and is our last event of the year apart from our **AGM on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June** at 7 p.m. in the Hall.

If you are coming along to the party remember to bring food and drink for the evening and of course your instrument(s).

There will be the opportunity too of bringing suitable donations for passing on to the Dunoon Food Bank.

Hope to see as many of you at the party as can manage, and have a great summer.

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**Congratulations**

Congratulations to our Chairman's daughter Molly on passing her driving test! Now you've got a tame Roadie, Evie, for getting you to all your gigs! Aye, right, says Evie!

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**Regular Session**

Each Thursday there is an impromptu session in McClure's Bar in Ferry Brae in Dunoon, courtesy of Martin Donovan, publican and LFW member. There is a mix of fiddles, accordions, small pipes, guitars and other stringed instruments and all levels are welcome. From about 8 p.m. till around 10.

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## Information & News

### Committee Contact Details

Chairperson; Evie Campbell  
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Treasurer; Teresa Hunt-Earle  
[thuntearle@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:thuntearle@hotmail.co.uk)

Secretary; John Kelly  
[john.kelly@fiddleworkshop.co.uk](mailto:john.kelly@fiddleworkshop.co.uk)

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### Troop Aid Fundraiser

LFW fiddlers will be performing again this year at this very worthwhile event on the afternoon of **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May**. Organised by Liz Fraser, whose sons and daughter-in-law are all regular soldiers, the aim is to provide packs of basic materials such as toiletries for injured soldiers who have been repatriated from service and may well have lost all their own personal possessions while being evacuated.

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### Give us your news items

Please e-mail your news or reports of events, workshops or other music-related activities to us for inclusion in the newsletter.

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Thanks to Alison for pointing me to the **Traditional Music Forum Newsletter** for the items in this column – not only valuable space-fillers but actually events which some of you might well wish to sample! It is full of interesting news.

The TMA can be found at:

[www.traditionalmusicforum.org](http://www.traditionalmusicforum.org)

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### Portsoy Traditional Boat Festival

Set between two harbours in the town of **Portsoy** on the Banffshire Coast, the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival takes place on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016, bringing together heritage vessels, a wide range of crafts, a popular food fayre with cookery demonstrations and a variety of traditional music performers including top traditional fiddler Paul Anderson and his wife Shona Donaldson, one of Scotland's finest ballad singers.

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### Two more you might like:

**1st-3rd July**, Borders: Newcastleton Traditional Music Festival

**7th-10th July**, Stonehaven: Stonehaven Folk Festival

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